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By: Markus Nolff Date: August 15, 2002

Inventor : Lutz Richter et al.
Applc. No. : 09/852,348
Filed : May 9, 2001
Title : Gathering Stapler with Separate Drives and Method of
Operating the Gathering Stapler
Examiner : Gloria R. Weeks - Art Unit: 3721

R E S P O N S E

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Hon. Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,
Washington, D. C. 20231

AUG 23 2002

TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

Sir:

Responsive to the Office Action dated August 7, 2002, the following remarks are made:

In deference to the restriction requirement on pages 2 and 3 of the above-identified Office Action, applicants elect **group I**, claims 1-14 for prosecution at this time.

Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application including the method claims of **group II** at a later date and/or to request a rejoinder under MPEP §821.04.

In view of the foregoing, the early issuance of an Action on the merits of claims is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Markus Nolff
MARKUS NOLFF
REG. NO. 37,006

For Applicants

Date: August 15, 2002

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